



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
SOUTH ATLANTIC DIVISION, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
ROOM 9M15, 60 FORSYTH ST., S.W.
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30303-8801

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

RECORD OF DECISION
BROWARD COUNTY SHORE PROTECTION PROJECT
SEGMENTS II AND III
BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA

DECISION

We have reviewed the General Reevaluation Report (GRR) and Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) on the Broward County Shore Protection Project, Segments II and III, Broward County, Florida. We have also reviewed all associated correspondence, including comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and the FEIS. Based upon this review and the views of interested agencies and the concerned public, I find that the plan recommended in the GRR and FEIS by the District Engineer, Jacksonville District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), is economically justified, technically feasible, in compliance with environmental statutes, and in the overall public interest.

PROJECT AUTHORITY AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION

The project was authorized by Section 301 of Public Law 89-298, passed on 27 October 1965, in accordance with the recommendations of the Chief of Engineers dated June 15, 1964, contained in House Document 91, 89th Congress. Reevaluation studies for segments II and III were completed in 1994 and April 1991, respectively, under the authority of Section 156 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1976, as amended by Section 934 of the Water Resource Development Act of 1986 (Public Law 99-662). This legislation granted the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works discretionary authority to extend Federal participation to the fiftieth year after initial construction for shore protection projects. Authorizations for Federal participation in Segments II and III expire in 2020 and 2026, respectively.

The coastline of Broward County is low-lying and vulnerable to storm surge and other storm event damages. Shoreline recession continues to be a problem along Broward County Beaches. The purpose of the GRR and FEIS was to evaluate alternatives to address these challenges and to recommend a comprehensive, cost-effective, and environmentally acceptable solution.

ALTERNATIVES AND RECOMMENDED PLAN

The GRR and FEIS evaluated various structural and non-structural alternatives to providing hurricane and storm damage reduction along two segments of the 24 miles of beaches at the communities of Deerfield Beach, Hillsboro Beach, Pompano Beach, Lauderdale By-the-Sea, Fort Lauderdale, Dania Beach, Hollywood and Hallandale. The project area covers 11.8 miles of shoreline. The plan of improvement recommended by the District Engineer is the National Economic Development (NED) plan and consists of the following features:

- Placement of 2.5 million cubic yards of material along 11.8 miles of Broward County's shoreline.
- Segment II (Hillsboro Inlet to Port Everglades), fill will be placed along beaches in Pompano Beach, Lauderdale By-the-Sea and Fort Lauderdale.
- Segment III (Port Everglades to the south county line), fill will be placed along beaches in John U. Lloyd State Park, Dania Beach, Hollywood and Hallandale Beach.
- Fill will be obtained from five discrete offshore borrow areas located in the central and northern portion of the county.
- Development and implementation of an integrated pre- and post-construction monitoring plan was developed in close coordination with Federal and State resource agencies.

Approximately 2.5 million cubic yards of sand would be placed for the initial construction with a total of 5.4 million cubic yards of sand needed for the life of the project.

In addition to a "no action" alternative, both structural and non-structural alternatives were evaluated for various levels of protection. These alternatives are fully described in the GRR and FEIS. Under the no-action alternative, there would be no Federal participation in hurricane and storm damage reduction for the project area. The "no action" alternative does not satisfy the planning objectives. Therefore, all NED benefits that would be provided by the recommended plan would be foregone. Non-structural alternatives that were evaluated for beach communities are not economically feasible. In addition, these alternatives do not fully address the issue of the loss of land, including the existing beach, caused by long-term erosion. Consequently, non-structural measures were determined not to offer reasonable solutions for the issues identified for the Broward County beaches.

PUBLIC COORDINATION

The FEIS was coordinated with pertinent agencies and interested members of the public. A Notice of Availability of the FEIS was published in the Federal Register on January 2, 2004. Numerous comments were received from Federal, state, and local government agencies, property owners, environmental organizations, and individual stakeholders. Those who commented expressed strong opinions, both for and against the proposed project. Principal environmental concerns related to adverse impacts on near shore reefs and hard bottom communities in the project area. No new substantive issues were expressed in the FEIS that were not previously raised when the DEIS was coordinated with agencies and the public in April 2002. Substantial coordination with agencies and interest groups occurred between coordination of the DEIS and FEIS to address issues and concerns related to project impacts and mitigation.

FACTORS CONSIDERED TO MINIMIZE ADVERSE IMPACTS

The Corps considered applicable laws, executive orders, regulations, and local government plans in evaluating the alternatives. The recommended plan would avoid and minimize overall adverse environmental impacts and would include measures to mitigate unavoidable impacts. The plan

includes specific measures to offset impacts to near shore reefs and hard bottom communities associated with the project, clearly the most significant area of concern identified during project formulation and evaluation.


The Corps has considered the recommendations of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), as provided in their draft and final Coordination Act Reports, as well as the views of other Federal, state and local agencies, various interest groups, and members of the public as expressed during the scoping and public coordination processes. The Corps will continue to work in collaboration with appropriate Federal and state environmental resource agencies and environmental advocacy groups during the pre-construction engineering and design phases of the project. The State of Florida Department of Environmental Protection, in association with the issuance of a Joint Coastal permit to Broward County on May 12, 2003 concurred with the Jacksonville District's determination that the recommended project is consistent with the Florida Coastal Management Program. The aforementioned Joint Coastal Permit also serves as a Section 401 water quality certification for the recommended plan.

Consultation under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 has been completed. As a result of consultation with the USFWS regarding the effects of the proposed project on protected species of sea turtles, the USFWS issued a Biological Opinion on March 11, 2002 outlining measures necessary to protect sea turtles. These measures have been incorporated into the project plan. In January 2002, the Corps submitted a letter to the USFWS finding that the proposed action was likely to affect, but not likely to adversely affect, the endangered Florida manatee. In the October 10, 2002, Final Coordination Act Report (CAR), the USFWS concurred with the Corps determination. In a February 28, 2000 letter to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), the Corps requested concurrence with a determination that the recommended plan "may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect" listed species under NMFS purview. In a March 10, 2000 letter, NMFS concurred with the Corps determination.

SUMMARY

In view of the above, I find that the adverse impacts of the proposed action have been minimized, to the extent practicable, and the proposed action is consonant with national policy, statutes, and administrative directives. In consideration of all pertinent factors, the overall public interest will best be served by providing the improvements as described in the General Reevaluation Report and Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Broward County Shore Protection Project.

11 May 2004
Date


RANDAL R. CASTRO
Brigadier General, US Army
Commanding